

## CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND SKILLS

### Education Maintenance Allowances 2016-17

Scotland's Chief Statistician today published statistics on Education Maintenance Allowances (EMA) in the academic year 2016-17. EMA provides financial support for young people from low-income households to overcome financial barriers to participate in appropriate school or college courses or an activity agreement. This release contains information on students in Scotland who received at least one payment under the EMA programme.

#### Summary of Key Findings

- 31,675 school pupils, college students and individuals on activity agreements received EMA payments in Scotland in the academic year 2016-17, a slight decrease of 0.2% (-60) from 31,735 in 2015-16 ([Table 1](#)).
- School pupils account for 63.5% of young people in receipt of EMA payment, 32.2% being college students and the remaining 4.3% are young people on activity agreements.
- Of all 16-19 year old school pupils in Scotland, 29% received EMA payments in 2016-17.
- Of the potentially eligible full time 16-19 year old college students, 33% received EMA payments in 2016-17.
- The proportion of EMA recipients living in Scotland's 20% most deprived areas in 2016-17 increased to 36.8% (11,615) ([Table 3](#)). Among school pupils and those with an activity agreements receiving EMA, 34.9% (7,460) were living in the 20% most deprived areas, while 40.8% (4,155) of college students receiving EMA were living in the 20% most deprived areas.
- The total amount spent on EMA payments in 2016-17 was £24.6 million, a decrease of £137,855 from £24.8 million in 2015-16. Of this, £17.3 million (70.1%) was paid out to school pupils and those with an activity agreement, and the remaining £7.4 million (29.9%) paid out to young people attending college ([Table 4](#)).

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# 1. Background information on Education Maintenance Allowances (EMA)

1. The EMA programme aims to provide support for young people aged 16 to 19 from low income families to overcome financial barriers to stay on in post-16 education; either in school or on a college course or take up an activity agreement.
2. The programme is an entitlement and demand led programme which is administered by local authorities and colleges on behalf of Scottish Ministers. A weekly payment of £30 is made to a young person and is subject to attendance and agreement of a learning plan. Additional information on Education Maintenance Allowance in Scotland can be found at: [www.mygov.scot/ema/](http://www.mygov.scot/ema/).
3. A summary of the policy changes which have occurred can be seen in the table below.

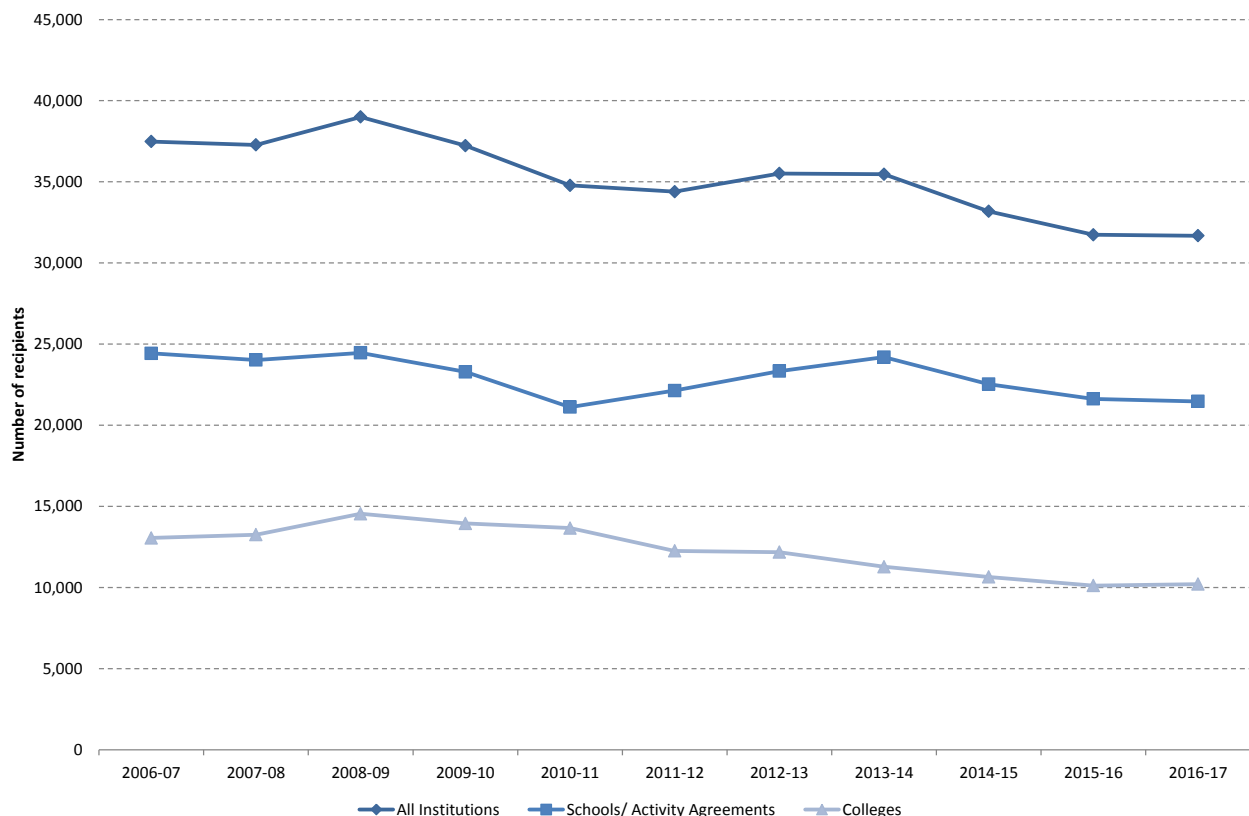
Time of policy change	Description of policy
<b>August 2004</b>	EMA introduced across Scotland for 16 year olds, initially consisting of weekly payments of £10, £20 and £30 categories dependent on household income. Following satisfactory attendance and learning agreement completion, bonus payments of £150 each were payable in January and June.
<b>Academic year 2005-06</b>	Eligibility extended to all 17 year olds
<b>Academic year 2006-07</b>	Eligibility extended to all 18 year olds
<b>Academic year 2007-08</b>	Eligibility extended to all 19 year olds
<b>Academic year 2009-10</b>	£10 and £20 payments were removed, and income threshold for £30 payment was set to £20,351. Additional higher income threshold of £22,403 was introduced for families with more than one dependent child.
<b>Academic year 2010-11</b>	Bonus payments removed from all recipients
<b>January 2016</b>	EMA programme extended to include part-time, non-advanced college courses. Income thresholds increased to £24,421 for families with one dependent child and £26,884 for families with more than one dependent child in the household.

## 2. Analysis and Interpretation

### Recipients of EMA

4. In 2016-17 there were 31,675 young people who received EMA payments, a slight decrease of 0.2% (-60) from 31,735 in 2015-16.

**Figure 1: Young people in receipt of EMA by institution type, 2006-07 to 2016-17**



5. Figure 1 shows how the number of people receiving EMA has changed over time. The overall total shows a decreasing trend in the number of claimants since 2006-07.
6. In 2016-17, School pupils accounted for 63.5% of young people in receipt of EMA payment, 32.2% were college students and the remaining 4.3% are young people on activity agreements ([Table 1](#)).
7. Of all school pupils in Scotland aged 16 to 19<sup>1</sup>, 29% received at least one EMA payment in 2016-17.
8. Of the potentially eligible full time college students<sup>2</sup> aged 16 to 19, 33% received at least one EMA payment in 2016-17.

<sup>1</sup> See methodology note – Age of recipients.

<sup>2</sup> See methodology note – College student population.

## Gender

9. In 2016-17, 49.2% (15,575) of EMA recipients were male and 50.8% (16,085) were female<sup>3</sup>.
10. Table 1 shows that the difference between the number of male and female EMA recipients. Over the years more females than males have claimed EMA each year, this difference between male and female recipients has decreased from 2,990 in 2006-07 to 510 in 2016-17.

**Table 1: Young people in receipt of EMA by institution type and gender, 2006-07, 2015-16 and 2016-17**

Academic Year	Institution Type	Total	Male	Female
2006-07	Schools/ Activity Agreements	24,430	11,485	12,945
	Colleges	13,050	5,760	7,290
	All Institutions	37,480	17,245	20,235
2015-16	Schools/ Activity Agreements	21,620	10,605	11,015
	Colleges	10,115	4,895	5,220
	All Institutions	31,735	15,500	16,235
2016-17	Schools/ Activity Agreements	21,470	10,575	10,895
	Colleges	10,205	5,005	5,190
	All Institutions	31,675	15,575	16,085

Figures in this table have been rounded to the nearest 5.  
See paragraph 3 for time series comparability.

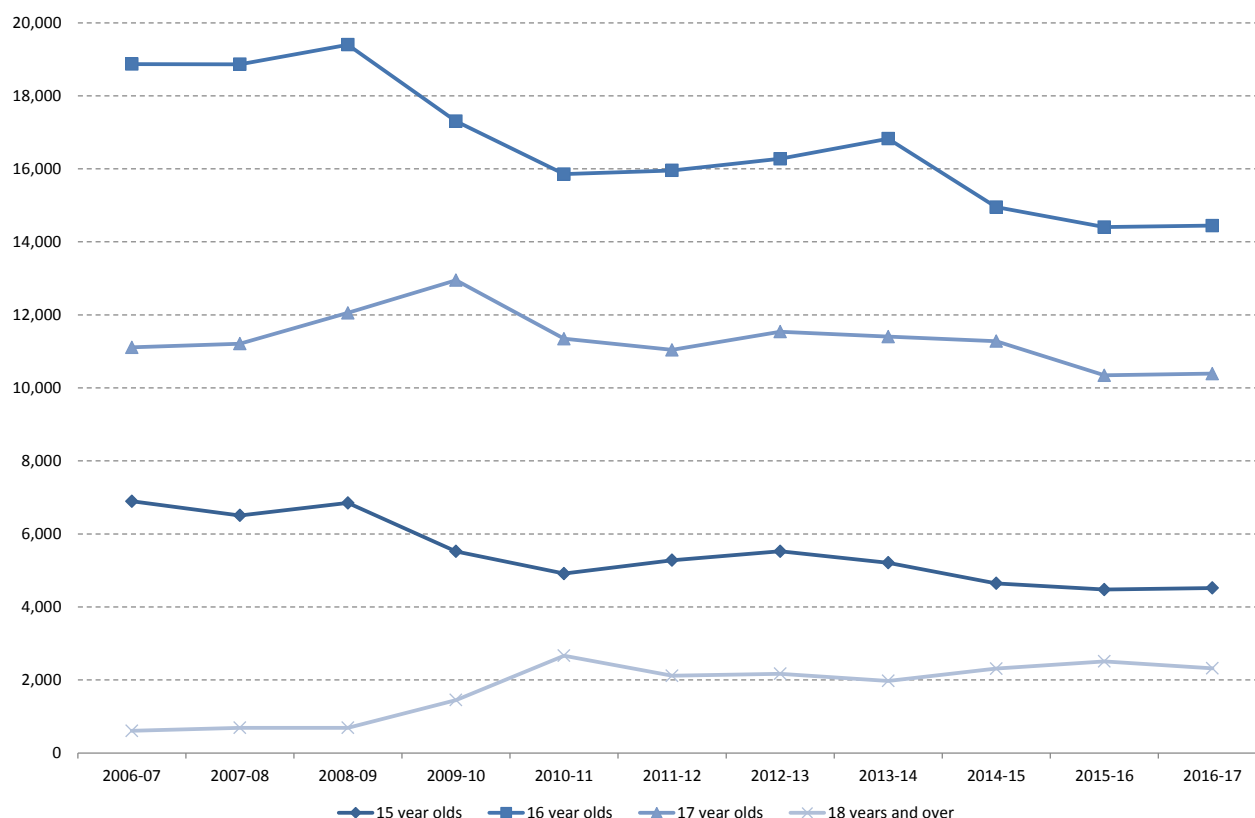
## Age

11. Figure 2 shows time series data for the different ages that receive EMA. Young people cannot receive EMA until they reach school leaving age. However, for data collection purposes, age is recorded on 30<sup>th</sup> September each academic year, therefore there are some 15 year olds recorded as receiving EMA.

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<sup>3</sup> See methodology note – Gender.

**Figure 2: Young people in receipt of EMA by Age, 2006-07 to 2016-17**



12. As in previous years, the majority of EMA recipients were 16 years old (14,445, 45.6%). 18 year olds and over make up the smallest proportion of EMA recipients (2,320, 7.3%) (Table 2).

13. Since 2015-16 there has been an increase of 1.0% in the number of 15 year olds (45), an increase of 0.3% in the number of 16 year olds (40) and an increase of 0.4% in 17 year olds (45) receiving EMA. Conversely, there has been a decrease of 7.6% (-190) in the number of over 18 year olds claiming EMA, which is largely due to fewer college students claiming.

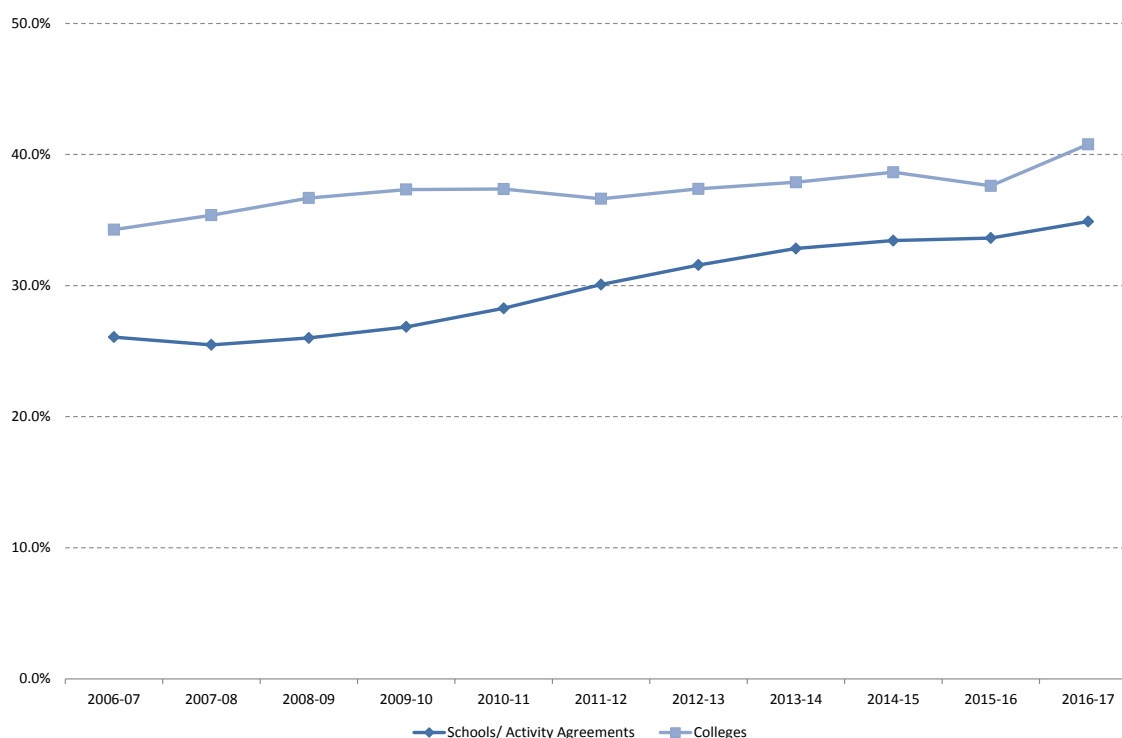
**Table 2: Young people in receipt of EMA by deprivation and age, 2006-07, 2015-16 and 2016-17**

Academic Year	Deprivation Background	Age				
		Total	15	16	17	18+
2006-07	Quintile 1 (Most Deprived)	10,780	2,015	5,325	3,250	190
	Quintile 2	8,900	1,625	4,510	2,605	160
	Quintile 3	7,565	1,415	3,790	2,250	110
	Quintile 4	5,985	1,105	3,055	1,730	95
	Quintile 5 (Least Deprived)	4,015	695	2,060	1,220	45
	All Areas	37,480	6,895	18,870	11,110	605
2015-16	Quintile 1 (Most Deprived)	11,015	1,570	4,980	3,600	865
	Quintile 2	7,950	1,100	3,590	2,550	710
	Quintile 3	5,860	785	2,710	1,915	445
	Quintile 4	4,320	640	1,930	1,450	295
	Quintile 5 (Least Deprived)	2,430	365	1,115	775	170
	All Areas	31,735	4,475	14,405	10,345	2,510
2016-17	Quintile 1 (Most Deprived)	11,615	1,620	5,345	3,755	890
	Quintile 2	7,915	1,100	3,600	2,585	630
	Quintile 3	5,630	830	2,565	1,865	375
	Quintile 4	3,940	580	1,760	1,325	270
	Quintile 5 (Least Deprived)	2,470	375	1,120	835	145
	All Areas	31,675	4,520	14,445	10,390	2,320

## Deprivation

14. The proportion of EMA recipients living in Scotland's 20% most deprived areas in 2016-17 increased to 36.8% (11,615). This is an increase of 7.8 percentage points since 2006-07 ([Table 3](#)). People from the 20% most deprived areas are therefore well represented among EMA recipients. This is partly explained by the fact that one of the main criterion for eligibility is household income, and income is a key domain in the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation<sup>4</sup>.
15. The actual number of EMA recipients living in Scotland's 20% most deprived areas in 2016-17 increased by 600, this is in contrast to the decrease seen in EMA recipients overall (60).
16. Figure 3 shows that the proportion of school pupils and those on activity agreements receiving EMA who live in the 20% most deprived areas increased over time. This proportion increased by 8.8 percentage points between 2006-07 and 2016-17 to 34.9%, compared to a 6.5 percentage point increase among college students over the same period, to 40.8%.
17. The proportion of college students receiving EMA who are from 20% most deprived areas has consistently been higher than the proportion for school pupils. This might be explained in part by the fact that people from the 20% most deprived areas in Scotland are generally over-represented in Scotland's colleges.

**Figure 3: Percentage of young people in receipt of EMA that are from 20% most deprived areas by institution type, 2006-07 to 2016-17**



<sup>4</sup> See methodology note – Recipients from Deprived Areas of Scotland

**Table 3: Young people in receipt of EMA by deprivation and institution type, 2006-07, 2015-16 and 2016-17**

Academic Year	Deprivation Background	All Institutions	Schools/ Activity Agreements	Colleges
2006-07	Quintile 1 (Most Deprived)	10,780	6,320	4,460
	Quintile 2	8,900	5,505	3,400
	Quintile 3	7,565	5,090	2,475
	Quintile 4	5,985	4,240	1,750
	Quintile 5 (Least Deprived)	4,015	3,085	930
	All Areas	37,480	24,430	13,050
2015-16	Quintile 1 (Most Deprived)	11,015	7,235	3,780
	Quintile 2	7,950	5,190	2,755
	Quintile 3	5,860	4,055	1,805
	Quintile 4	4,320	3,145	1,175
	Quintile 5 (Least Deprived)	2,430	1,890	535
	All Areas	31,735	21,620	10,115
2016-17	Quintile 1 (Most Deprived)	11,615	7,460	4,155
	Quintile 2	7,915	5,230	2,685
	Quintile 3	5,630	3,925	1,710
	Quintile 4	3,940	2,840	1,095
	Quintile 5 (Least Deprived)	2,470	1,930	545
	All Areas	31,675	21,470	10,205

### EMA Payments Total Spend on Payments

18. The EMA payment spend in 2016-17 was £24.6 million, a decrease of £137,855 from 2015-16. The decrease was driven by fewer school pupils and those on activity agreements claiming EMA (decreasing £112,020 from £17.4 million to £17.3 million), while the overall payment spend for college students continued to decrease over the same period, decreasing by £25,835.
19. The proportion of the EMA payment spend for school pupils and those on activity agreements in 2016-17 was 70.1%, the similar proportion as 2015-16 (Table 4).

**Table 4: EMA spend (£) by institution type, 2006-07, 2015-16 and 2016-17**

Academic Year	Institution Type	Number of Recipients	Total (£)	Average Spend (£)
2006-07*^	Schools/ Activity Agreements	24,430	22,923,580	736
	Colleges	13,050	9,509,705	571
	All Institutions	37,480	32,433,285	678
2015-16	Schools/ Activity Agreements	21,620	17,383,110	804
	Colleges	10,115	7,376,865	729
	All Institutions	31,735	24,759,975	780
2016-17	Schools/ Activity Agreements	21,470	17,271,090	804
	Colleges	10,205	7,351,030	720
	All Institutions	31,675	24,622,120	777

\*Note: for 2006-07 academic year total (£) includes bonus payments. However, these bonus payments are excluded when calculating average spend.

20. The proportion of the EMA payment spends for each gender was 48.8% for males and 51.1% for females.



**Table 5: EMA payment spend (£) by gender, 2006-07, 2015-16 and 2016-17**

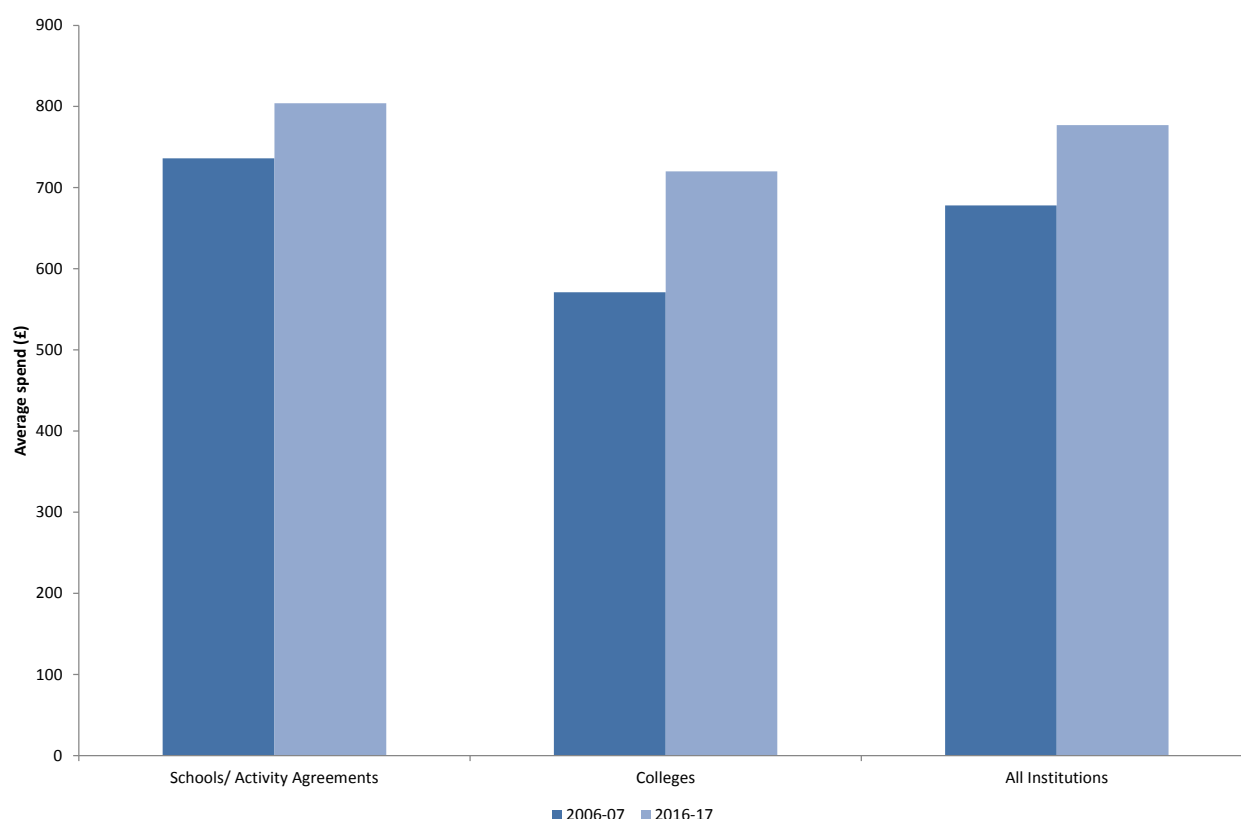
Academic Year	Gender	Number of Recipients	Total (£)	Average Spend (£)
2006-07*	Male	17,245	14,847,315	676
	Female	20,235	17,585,970	680
	Total	37,480	32,433,285	678
2015-16	Male	15,500	12,009,195	775
	Female	16,235	12,749,520	785
	Total	31,735	24,759,975	780
2016-17	Male	15,575	12,020,460	772
	Female	16,085	12,592,030	783
	Total	31,675	24,622,120	777

\* Note: for 2006-07 academic year total (£) includes bonus payments. However, these bonus payments are excluded when calculating average spend.

### **Average Payment Spend per Person (excluding bonus payments)**

21. Figure 4 charts the EMA programme's average annual payment spends per person. Average payment spend was calculated by dividing the total spend on weekly payments by the number of people who received an EMA payment each year. Bonus payments were excluded to allow comparisons with previous years' data, as bonus payments ceased in 2010-11.

**Figure 4: Average EMA spend per claimant by institution type, 2006-07 and 2016-17**



22. Figure 4 shows that the average EMA payment spends per person increased between 2006-07 and 2016-17.

23. Table 6 shows the differences in average spend between 2006-07 and 2016-17. The average payment in 2016-17 was £777 per person, showing an increase of 14.6% (£99) since 2006-07.

**Table 6: Average EMA spend by institution type, 2006-07 and 2016-17**

Institution Type	2006-07	2015-16	2016-17	Change (£)	Change (£)
	Average Payments (£)	Average Payments (£)	Average Payments (£)	since 2006-07	since 2015-16
School/ Activity Agreement	736	804	804	68	0
College	571	729	720	149	-9
Total	678	780	777	99	-3

24. One explanation for the increases in average payment is the removal of the £10 and £20 payment levels after 2008-09. Since all students now receive the maximum £30 weekly payments, the average spend per person would be expected to be higher in subsequent academic years.
25. Looking at the average payments by deprivation quintile, although those in the 20% most deprived areas make up the largest proportion of recipients they receive the lowest average payment of £760. This compares to those from the least deprived areas receiving average payments of £827.

**Table 7: Average EMA spend by deprivation 2016-17**

SIMD 2016	Number of Recipients	Total Payments (£)	Average Payments (£)
Quintile 1	11,615	8,828,860	760
Quintile 2	7,915	6,117,210	773
Quintile 3	5,630	4,427,760	786
Quintile 4	3,940	3,141,540	797
Quintile 5	2,470	2,043,750	827
Total	31,675	24,622,120	777

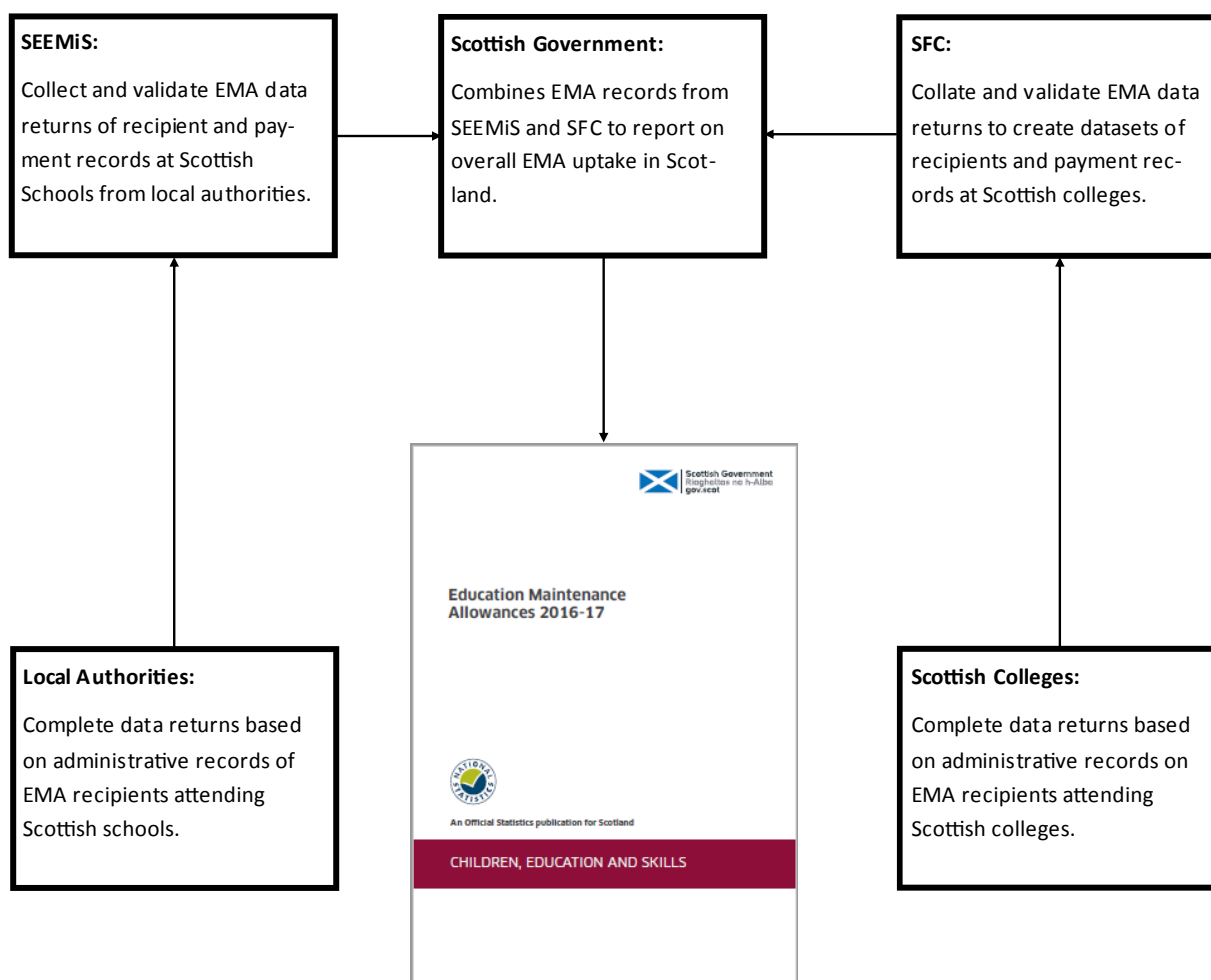
### Impact of January 2016 policy extension

26. In January 2016 the EMA programme was extended, increasing the household income threshold for claimants under both schemes. This raised the threshold for households with one dependent child to £24,421 (from £20,351), and households with two or more dependent children to £26,884 (from £22,403). It also allowed students on non-advanced part-time college courses to claim EMA.
27. Additional analysis of the data was carried out to estimate the number of claimants from schools affected by the change in household income from January 2016. The analysis estimates that this EMA extension has impacted approximately 1,300 school pupils. These are students who previously would not have been eligible for EMA, but now are.
28. For an estimate of the impact the recent policy changes have had at colleges additional analysis will need to be carried out, however the number of recipients at college receiving EMA increased. This increase goes against the trend that has seen the number of recipients decreasing since the 2008-09 academic year.

### 3. Methodological Note

#### Data Sources

29. Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) data are collected by the Scottish Government from local authorities which administer EMA payments to school pupils and those on activity agreements, and the Scottish Funding Council, which administers EMA payments to college students. Data returns from Local authorities<sup>5</sup> are collated by SEEMiS, while those collected from colleges are collated and validated by the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) before being submitted to the Scottish Government.
30. Where analysis refers to institutions rather than schools or colleges, data from both Scottish schools and Scottish colleges have been combined to report on all Scottish institutions.



#### Coverage

31. EMA are means tested payments to young people participating in a school or college, or an activity agreement. The data included in this publication cover

<sup>5</sup> Note: returns from the Local Authorities of Shetland Islands and Orkney Islands include a small number of returns for students at colleges.

those who participate in the EMA programme, but not necessarily all of those who were eligible to participate.

32. Although measures are taken within both the school and college data to minimise the chances of more than one record being created for the same student, an element of duplication is likely to still occur where a student moves from school into college in the same academic year. At the moment there is not a reliable way of identifying such cases. Efforts are being made in the long term to improve the collection of Scottish Candidate Numbers (SCNs) for EMA recipients in colleges. If this succeeds it may be possible to use SCNs, possibly in combination with other student characteristics, to identify those who move between school and college and therefore reduce any associated over-counting.

### **Age of Recipients**

33. In this publication the age of recipient refers to their age as at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2016.

### **Gender of Recipients**

34. Gender was not recorded for 15 EMA recipients in 2016-17, 3 EMA recipients in 2015-16 and 4 EMA recipients in 2014-15. In 2013-14, gender was not recorded for 405 EMA recipients, 360 of which were college students.

### **School Pupil Population**

35. The proportion of all 16-19 year old school pupils that are in receipt of EMA is calculated in this publication using public and private school population data for Scotland. This year, the number of pupils aged 16-19 attending an Independent School in Scotland was requested from and provided by Education Scotland. This estimation was then added to the 2016 Pupil Census figure of publicly funded secondary school pupils to achieve an estimate of the total 16 to 19 year old school population, as at September 2016. Pupil Census data can be accessed at this link:  
<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-Education/dspupcensus>.

### **College Student Population**

36. The proportion of all full time 16-19 year old college students that are in receipt of EMA is calculated in this publication using Scottish Funding Council data. The definition of full time used is consistent with eligibility criterion for EMA, and the reference age was as at August 2016.

### **Activity Agreements**

37. Activity agreements were rolled out nationally on 1 April 2011. An activity agreement is an agreement between a young person and an advisor that the young person will take part in a programme of learning and activity which

helps them to become ready for formal learning or employment (<https://www.mygov.scot/activity-agreements/>). The young person may receive an EMA in return for complying with this agreement.

38. Within this publication's tables, young people who receive an EMA in return for complying with an activity agreement are included in the School category. This is in line with previous editions of this publication.

## **Recipients from Deprived Areas of Scotland**

39. Analysis of entrants from deprived areas of Scotland is based on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD). The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (2016) combines 38 indicators across 7 domains, namely: income, employment, health, education, crime, access and housing. The overall index is a weighted sum of the seven domain scores. The weighting for each domain is based on the relative importance of the domain in measuring multiple deprivation, the robustness of the data and the time lag between data collection and the production of the SIMD.
40. EMA recipients from the 20% most deprived areas are those whose home address was within one of the 20% lowest ranked areas in Scotland. The SIMD is split into 6,976 small areas called Data Zones, with 20 per cent lowest ranked areas comprising of Data Zones 1 to 1,395. A process of postcode matching was undertaken to identify which Data Zones recipients belong to. In 2016-17, 99.7% of recipients were successfully matched through this process. Those recipients whose postcodes belonged to one of the 20% lowest ranked Data Zones in the SIMD are classified as entrants from deprived areas.
41. SIMD 2016 has been used for academic years 2016-17<sup>6</sup>. SIMD 2012 has been used for academic years 2013-14, 2014-15 and 2015-16. SIMD 2009 was used for all other academic years.
42. More information on the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation can be found at the following web address: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/SIMD>.

## **Data Presentation**

43. In all tables and figures on recipients have been rounded to the nearest 5 (0, 1 and 2 being rounded to 0). Figures on EMA spend have not been rounded. Unknown values are not displayed individually in tables but are included in totals. Figures may not sum to totals due to rounding and the inclusion of unknown values. Unless stated otherwise, percentages in tables are calculated from unrounded values. Percentages in the text of the publication are calculated from the figures displayed in the tables.

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<sup>6</sup> SIMD 2016 has been used for the 2016-17 academic year, this is in line with the approach taken by Scottish Governments Education Analytical Services Directorate for School data. The use of SIMD 2016 for 2016-17 differs to the approach taken when publishing University and College Statistics. University and College statistics will move on to SIMD 2016 for academic year 2017-18.

### **Coverage of Spend Data**

44. The financial figures in this publication refer to the amount spent on EMA payments only. This publication does not cover any other costs associated with the EMA programme, such as administrative costs.
45. A small percentage of local authority payments (estimated in previous years to be less than 0.5%) are not recorded on management information systems. These 'manual' payments are excluded from the figures presented in this publication.

## **A National Statistics publication for Scotland**

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be interpreted to mean that the statistics: meet identified user needs; are produced, managed and disseminated to high standards; and are explained well.

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## **How to access background or source data**

The data collected for this statistical bulletin may be made available on request, subject to consideration of legal and ethical factors. Please contact [fhestatistics@gov.scot](mailto:fhestatistics@gov.scot) for further information.

## **Complaints and suggestions**

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